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## **Question Time: How many candidates on stage at once?**

**Fox News only allowing top 10 GOP hopefuls**

**By Rob Burgess**  
**Tribune night editor**

[**Editor's note:** To participate in future queries, keep an eye on our Twitter and Facebook accounts.]

When Fox News Channel hosts the first Republican presidential debate Aug. 6 in Cleveland, only the top 10 of the 16 announced candidates will be allowed to participate. This will be determined by an average of five national polls as of 5 p.m. Aug. 4. So, we wanted to know: "Do you think this is a good idea, or should all 16 candidates be allowed on stage? Why?"

### **Your answers**

"It should be split: eight one night, and eight the next." — **Calvin Fitch**

"It would take forever to have all 16 speak! Ten is bad enough."  
— **Nathan Grell**

“I think they all should be able to represent themselves — someone might stand out that we weren't able to see before.” — **Renate Sharp**

“The more clowns, the bigger the circus. Let them all take part.”

— **Merle Tosche**

### **Our answers**

“Ten is too many, so 16 is far too many. It would be either far too little from each candidate, or an endurance test. Run four groups of four, have viewers elect winners, and have the final four in a final debate. With 10 or 16, you're going to have top dogs ignore lesser candidates and focus on attacking, um, debating each other anyway.” — **Pedro Velazco**

### **Velazco**

“I'd like all 16 to be there. I'm not going to watch it, but it will give more ammo for the SNL debate parody sketches.” — **Steve Mullen**

“All political ideologies aside, I think this is a disaster waiting to happen. You see how badly two or three candidates try to talk over each other after every question is raised. I won't watch a 10-pronged debate for that simple reason.” — **Josh Sigler**

“I've written about this before, but I'm always for expanding debates to include more viewpoints. It's something we don't see enough of in these debates. With 16 people on stage at one time, though, it's not really a debate anymore. There has to be another word for it.

Roundtable? Forum? It may be unwieldy, but when you only feature some of the contenders and not others, you make the popular ones more popular just by being popular in the first place and the less popular candidates become even less legitimate in the eyes of voters because they can't make it to the stage. It's a feedback loop." — **Rob Burgess**

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